

7550

THE BASIC TRUTHS OF RELIGION

THE THREE WORLD MOVEMENTS

THE BASIC TRUTHS OF THE WORLD RELIGION ; THE FELLOWSHIP OF RELIGIONS

BY

1. C. JINARĀJADĀSA
2. ANNIE BESANT

(Thursday, December 24, 1925)

C. JINARĀJADĀSA

FRIENDS :

There is taking place to-day in the world a very great adjustment of ideas. You will note that, in all typically cultured people, there is being added to the conception of the nation the idea of the world. We are more and more being driven by stress of circumstance to go outside the barriers of our national thinking. The economic condition of the world has of late driven each country to organise itself, not merely for its national purposes, but also for international co-operation. The existence of the League of Nations to-day is an indication of the dawn of this new era in the relations between nations. Much is happening in commerce, in industry and in banking, all forcing people to realise that the welfare of a single nation is henceforth dependent upon the welfare of the whole world. Just as in politics and economics, we are being driven more and more to live in the idea of a world rather than of a nation, so is it in culture. The typically cultured man or woman of any nation lives to-day, delighting

not only in the growth of his or her own national tradition, but in all the achievements of other cultural traditions also. It is no exaggeration to say that, though people still love their national culture, they have found something larger, more exquisite, and that is a world culture.

These world systems, political, economic and cultural, are being forced upon us whether we want them or not. It is true that there are still, in the domain of political and national thinking, many who desire their nation to stand isolated. But that desire for economic or political isolation is being wrenched from them, by the fact that the world as a larger unit presses more and more upon them. Similarly, we may still have for several generations narrow-minded people who can admire only their own national culture. But that attitude must slowly disappear with the spread of knowledge.

It is exactly the same in the domain of Religion. We have in the world to-day many great religions which give us splendid truths. But just as a world economic system is being imposed upon us, and a world culture is widening our horizon, so there is coming a World Religion to change us. As a matter of fact, the thought of a World Religion is already in the air, in spite of the fact that we still have the majority in each religion not desiring any such universal conception.

THE BASIC TRUTHS OF RELIGION

[Before the beginning of the first lecture, the Vice-President read the following statement on "The Basic Truths of Religion," agreed upon by the General Council of the Society, on December 23, 1925.]

THEOSOPHY, the Divine Wisdom, is the root of all the great religions, living and dead ; all are branches of that ever-living Tree of Life, with its root in Heaven, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations of the world. Each special religion brings out and emphasises some special aspect of the Truth, necessary for the evolution of humanity during the age it opens, and shapes the civilisation of that age, enriching the religious, moral and cultural heritage of the human race.

The World Religion, of which all special religions are integral parts—whether or not they recognise their places in the World Order—declares :

THE THREE WORLD MOVEMENTS

1. There is one transcendent Self-Existent Life, eternal, all-pervading, all-sustaining, whence all worlds derive their several lives, whereby and wherein all things which exist live and move and have their being.

2. For our world this Life is immanent, and is manifested as the Logos, the Word, worshipped under different Names, in different religions, but ever recognised as the One Creator, Preserver and Regenerator.

3. Under Him, our world is ruled and guided by a Hierarchy of His Elder Children, variously called Rishis, Sages, Saints, among whom are the World-Teachers, who for each age re-proclaim the essential truths of religion and morality in a form suited to the age; this Hierarchy is aided in its work by the hosts of Beings—again variously named, Devas, Angels, Shining Ones—discharging functions recognised in all religions.

4. Human beings form one order of the creatures evolving on this earth, and

each human being evolves by successive life-periods, gathering experiences and building them into character, reaping always as he sows, until he has learned the lessons taught in the three worlds—the earth, the intermediate state and the heavens—in which a complete life-period is passed, and has reached human perfection, when he enters the company of just men made perfect, that rules and guides the evolving lives in all stages of their growth.

These are the Basic Truths of the World Religion, of which all religions are specialised branches ; to proclaim and teach these the Theosophical Society was founded and exists.

The World Religion will thus help in preparing the way for the Coming of the World-Teacher, who shall give to the Basic Truths the form suited to the age He will open—the Age of Brotherhood.

The Theosophical Society admits to its fellowship all who desire to enter it, whether or not they hold any of these basic truths, or belong to any religion or to none, since all belong to the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, of which it is a nucleus.

This coming of the World Religion is facilitated by many discoveries, specially those concerning man. To-day in all psychological thinking, man is recognised as not merely the physical body but as having also a subconscious self. Furthermore, all the traditions of Mysticism in the various religions are being revived, and so slowly there is coming a conception about man, which is the utter reversal of what was the gospel of Materialism fifty years ago. Man is being recognised more and more by psychologists as a spiritual man ; and that means that his bodily embodiment, which we know fullest and best, is only a partial expression of the true spiritual man.

It is on the ideas of what is the nature of the spiritual Self in man that the new coming religions and philosophies very largely depend. What are the ideas as to the Self in man which we find in the great traditions of the past ? Here, in Hinduism, the ancient proclamation is still known by millions, even though few may live it. That ancient proclamation is that man and God are one. He who is steeped in the tradition of India, when at dawn he looks at the sun, the symbol of God, says : “ So aham ” — *I am He*. When we turn to Buddhism, we find practically the same assertion, though it is put in different terms ; for Buddhism asserts that salvation is from within, that within a man is all that can be conceived of as necessary to aid

him to reach his supreme goal. To-day in Christendom, the same teaching is slowly reasserting itself. Once upon a time, in the early days of Christendom, the teaching was given that man was not merely the creature made by God, but had within him the nature of God also. It was said in Judaism that "God created man in His own image". This ancient tradition came into Christendom, with the vivifying fire of the Christ, when St. Paul taught the early Christians that Christ did not stand unique and apart from all mankind. He was the "firstfruits" of a glorious harvest; in His resurrection, in His glory, was the promise of the resurrection and the glory of every child of God. The most wonderful thing in existence to St. Paul was "Christ in you, the hope of glory," not merely the risen Christ, a unique personality of one World-Teacher, but that mystic Christ in each one of us who is waiting for resurrection. It is the same doctrine which we have in the Muhammadan tradition, especially in the doctrine of the Sūfis. That doctrine tells us that, when we look at the universal beauty created by God, all its magnificence is in some mystical manner in man also, for the bond which links God and man is not of master and slave but of beloved and lover.

All the traditions of the past converge in telling us that man is a miniature universe. In psychoanalysis to-day, they tell us that behind man's

subconsciousness there stands a world subconsciousness. Hinduism tells us that every human being is God. Buddhism tells us that within man's own nature is all that is necessary for his salvation, and that he need not look outside of himself to any Deity. They all teach that man has within him the mystery of the universe. How may one believe that? We who are sinful, who fail again and again, we who know, however dimly, what is the majesty of God, how dare we assert that we are one with Him?

Yet it is the experience of all mankind that, under certain conditions, a human being can reflect the attributes of Divinity. Are there not mothers who see all in all of love and joy in the child, so that for the time being the child occupies the place occupied by God? Are there not husbands and wives who have seen in their wives and husbands something of a divine Wonder, so that the beloved is nearer than God Himself? The beloved and the lover, human though they be, can stand in such a relation to each other that, under the wonderful transformation of love, all dross of mortality slips away, and each stands revealed to the other as the immortal Godhead. There are experiences in life possible to us all which can prove to us that man has within him all the glories of Heaven.

Now in the coming World Religion, more and more men will seek God, no longer as heretofore in a far off heaven, in some realm beyond the reach of our

senses, but far more in the worlds here below. In other words, they will seek in men, in such as you and I are, the revelation of Immortality and Divinity. That is the fact which to me stands out as the great characteristic of the coming age. It will not mean that a single religion will lose its value ; all the great religions will still retain their ancient splendour. But we shall see the significance of each religion, no longer as heretofore in trying to understand the nature of God, but far more the nature of Man.

I have mentioned that all the truths which are being discovered in every sphere of life are converging to lead us to a World Religion. You will note that wherever men and women meet in Congresses and Conventions to discuss the problems of man, they always work in harmony, and there is no line of division. But wherever men dispute about God, then at once divisions become more emphasised. That surely ought not to be the case ; for if there is one unity, it is the Unity of God. But we have wandered away so far from the real knowledge of what God is, that when we try to understand Him to-day, instead of opening out our arms and coming together with a fellow-worshipper in God, we draw a line between him and us and say : “ No, you are a Christian, I am a Hindu. You are a Buddhist ; I am a Zoroastrian.” That is the fact to-day. Except in the Theosophical Society, you will not find men and women of all

II

THE WORLD UNIVERSITY

BY

1. J. KRISHNAMURTI

2. THE RT. REV. G. S. ARUNDALE

(Friday, December 25, 1925)

J. KRISHNAMURTI

FRIENDS :

The chief function of education is to make individuals happy, not in a brutalised or self-satisfied fashion, but opening up to them various avenues of experience and showing them the right values of life, teaching them how to adapt themselves to the conditions of daily life. Education should be the main source of comfort in life. Without education a man is a mere savage. You hear nowadays very frequently the phrase: "So-and-so is very well educated." What does it mean? It means that one must beware of such an individual. He has generally taken many degrees, passed many examinations, he is apt to be unsympathetic and generally irreligious, and he does not believe in any high ideal, thinking mainly of filling his purse. In fact, that so-called educated man is rather a bore. When I hear that phrase: "He is a well-educated man," I generally give him a clear space and seek the other side of the road or the other side of the room.

The so-called educated man is the product of our modern schools, the result of our modern teachers.

If I had a son, as most of you have, the ordinary school is the last place to which I should send him, where he learns practically nothing that is worth learning, where knowledge of the true type is suppressed, where culture is never put forward as a great ideal, where immorality which is so childish, so puerile, is so rampant, where respect for the big ideas of life is never taught, where examinations, the dates of wars and the birthdays of unfortunate kings are put forward as being of the greatest value in life. In fact those schools and those teachers teach nothing worth knowing about life. The teachers are mere machines, and the schools are mere factories where they turn out students every year by the hundred or more. So it happens that these students go out with as little knowledge of life as possible, with as little respect for other human beings as possible, and with as little feeling for one another as possible. When we call a man well educated, he generally has degrees and is very proud of printing them after his name.

The one essential thing that makes life really worth living, really worth trying for, is suppressed in education, and that is beauty. Go to any school and you will see a general untidiness, squalor and dirt. I am speaking only of those schools that are everywhere to be seen in India. And the teacher or the professor is the product of the same unintelligent

and unsympathetic school of his younger days. He is a mere machine. He teaches what he has learnt, and he carries out what he thinks is his duty in the school. He is generally a man of little knowledge but of great book learning. I am again speaking of schools in India, because I have had some experience of them.

I have been beaten, I do not know how many times. I can remember coming back from school one day after having been beaten. For the whole day I was shivering. For the next two days, I could not get control of my body. I suppose many of you have experienced the same thing, and have felt how you would like to return some of those same feelings to the teacher. And yet you send your boys and girls every year to that factory, to be treated in the same manner. I do not call it a school, which is a very good word. The teacher has but one desire, to force his book knowledge upon the pupil at all costs, whether the pupil likes it or not, whether he is or is not adapted to that particular way of learning, to that particular manner of treatment, or to that particular fashion of putting the subject forward. If the boy is not apt enough, is not quick enough to learn, he is punished, he is made to stand on a bench by the hour, he is beaten with a cane. He is brutalised, he is ill-treated by the savage teacher, so that the boy when he grows up becomes

in his turn a savage with as little feeling, as little control over his temper, over his passion, as the teacher himself. This particularly applies to those schools, naturally, where there is little enlightenment, where there is little thought for the welfare of the child, and that especially is the case in India, as you so well know, except in those schools which Theosophists control. The quickest way, apparently, to instil learning is to beat the pupil. The quickest way to make him pass examinations is through beating, through brutalising, through cruelty.

You have all gone through this, and yet you allow your children to go through it year in and year out. India should be the most wonderful country in the world, the most spiritual country, the most beautiful and noble country, because we have the heritage of the Great Ones, and each one of us should feel the responsibility of making it still greater. And yet we allow our children who are our heirs, our representatives, to be treated in every fashion, in every possible manner, that can be invented by cruel teachers. After hearing the speech of Bishop Arundale, you will still carry on the same tradition, the brutal tradition of beating children in your homes and allowing them to be beaten in schools. You will not change, because you have yourselves become brutalised, and do not realise it.

We want to start new schools, new universities everywhere, all over the world, where there shall be the feeling of affection, the feeling of respect, the feeling of beauty and comfort for the children. That should be the essence of education throughout the world. It seems to me that the chief function of all higher education should be to impart the art of realising the ideal, of achieving the elements of distinction and the adornment of life. In other words, we should point out to young people the high ideals of education, the essentials of education, so that they will become so steeped in them that they will never revert to the older ways of living. That is the chief function of education, to produce a perfect being. We should try to master all experience, all passions, all thoughts, using them as stepping stones to the supreme height of consciousness where division ceases. In other words, we should aim to become a true Yogi, a true Rishi, to realise the true ideal of unity, where we shall not quarrel because one is an Englishman and another an Indian, because one is Muhammadan and another Buddhist, where division of classes ceases, where we shall recognise and feel as a unit each doing his duty, and each giving beauty to life in his own way.

That is the goal that so many so-called highly educated people miss. What is the good of education or of anything in life, if it does not help us to feel

for others, to stand up for others? Take for instance a flower like the lotus. If you give me a single petal of it I shall appreciate it, because of its colour, its delicacy, its fragrance, but if you give me the entire flower as a whole, how much more beautiful it is, how much more wonderful, how much more complete and how much more divine it is than the simple petal. So we are all as one flower, though each one of us is a distinct petal. The same applies to all nationalities, to all castes, to all creeds and to all sects.

Then education should impart culture and refinement. In what schools do you find these taught? In what household do you find them? You think these are all little things. We in India should be careful to carry out even little things to perfection. For in the training of mind and emotions, we must have culture, refinement and beauty, and true education consists in the observance of these things, and in the carrying of them out in daily life. Education is not the mere study of books as most of us think. It consists in the training of the mind to observe, to experience, to think intelligently, to feel greatly and nobly, and to act divinely. Where do you find such education, in what schools, in what families? For families are after all another form of school. You read of these ideas in books year in and year out, you hear them from platforms but you do not alter. You agree, you nod your heads and

smile, but there is no action, there is no change, because there is not the desire to do the right thing. That desire must come from the true source—the desire to serve, not merely to acquire wealth, the desire to be noble, not for self-glorification, but for the sake of civilisation. You are a part of the world. You must give what you have acquired to the world, to the Nation, whether you be an Indian or an Englishman or of any other nationality.

True education consists in training to serve, not for honours, not for self-glorification, not for recognition by the world. You find that most people when they are educated are seeking for these honours, for these so-called real things of life, and they impress it on their children by their conduct, by their thought, by their action, so that the children grow up in their footsteps, in a false path which does not lead to happiness, but always leads to the destruction of civilisation and of Nations. If you understand education from this standpoint, you will see that everybody around you must be happy and enjoying themselves. You could not bear to see degradation, you would not tolerate for one single moment squalor or dirt, and above all you would fight constantly against these things because you would desire to see others as happy as you are yourself.

Education of this true type recognises that nobility of thought is the one thing worth knowing, worth

having and worth working for. These are the new principles of education, they must be our laws which we carry out in our education, in our homes and in our minds and hearts. To realise them must be our one constant desire and our one purpose in life.

Then you must have in mind the physical body. How many schools in India care for the real well-being of the physical body? There are many schools in Europe, and some here, which train in athletics, in strength, but what is the principle underlying them? Is it merely to conquer other teams in games and similar competitions? What should be our one desire? To endow the physical body with such a measure of health that we may pass our days unhindered in the service of humanity. That should be our principle with regard to the body. There should be neither overfeeding nor underfeeding, neither over-comfort nor under-comfort, but a mean, a perfect standard, that shall give us perfect control over the body so that it shall carry out the will of the ego, the soul.

Again in what school is religion upheld? There are some schools where religion is taught carelessly by a stupid teacher who is no more religious than his pupil. Our whole system of life, if it is to last, must be based on religion. That is the only thing worth living for and worth striving for. Take away that ideal, and where do we stand when we experience the shocks of life?

Education is the first training ground of true friendship, of true love and of true comradeship. They are the main things in life worth striving for and living for, and not mere book knowledge or the mere study of stupid things. If we follow the new principles of education, we shall live to conquer the world.

BISHOP G. S. ARUNDALE

THE subject of education is one on which I have spoken, as you know, before. But there is just as much need for speaking on education to-day as ever there was. For the world stands in need of that new type of education, the heart of which has been already given to you by my brother Krishnaji, and the more we can talk about it and follow up the talk by action the more will the world be ready to receive and to welcome and to follow practically the great World-Teacher, when He shall come to lead us.

You will probably have already seen the September issue of the *Herald of the Star* in which certain ideas connected with the Theosophical World University were outlined. I do not wish to traverse that ground again. I rather wish to lay down in amplification, perhaps, of the truths already given to us by my brother—I wish to lay down certain principles, as I see them, of education, which we all of us must bear in mind. I want all of you, if you agree with them, to stand uncompromisingly for them. It is not enough, as my brother has already told you, to shake your heads and perhaps in a vague manner to admire

these things from afar and to say : “ O, how I wish we could achieve it, but all these cannot come in my time.” “ It may come in the future, but not to-day and not to-morrow and not even after many days.” That is not the way in which a Theosophist looks at great and true principles of life. First, he stands for them uncompromisingly, and second, he tries to bring them into the realm of the practical. So I want you all to stand, if you will, uncompromisingly for certain principles of education and to work for them. I do not say that it is always possible to carry the uncompromising attitude into daily life. I suppose sometimes compromise is not only wise but necessary. But never forget the essential principles, and endeavour steadily to pursue them into the world of the actual. Sometimes people say and may say after our address : “ Well, but these things are not practical.” Now, they are practical. They can be done ; they have been done, and they are being done, as my brother has already told you, by the Theosophical Society ; and what the Theosophical Society has done, is doing to-day, the world must be pushed forward to do to-morrow, and we are the people to give the world the necessary push. That is what we are here for. That is the only reason for the membership of the Theosophical Society, not to help ourselves but to help the world, and no greater need for help is there than among the coming generation

in whose hands shall be the shaping of the immediate future. This Theosophical World University is in the first place a Theosophical University. In the second place equally, of course, a World University. I do not want to trouble you with the constitution of it: that you will be able to read at your leisure. I rather want to point out to you certain qualifications which, I venture to hope, we shall demand from those who teach in it, whether in one centre or in another, so that, having to some extent those qualifications themselves, they may be able to help their pupils to unfold them also.

Let me go through these qualifications, these examinations, if I may be permitted to use the very unfortunate word that we have in education, which the teachers might do well to pass. Having travelled all over Europe, I find that the practical educational idealists in every country are beginning to stand for two great educational principles, principles with which I myself most heartily agree. The first object of education, you will find the real Theosophist saying, whether he is or he is not a member of the Theosophical Society, is the growing together within God's Law to a common end. The second great principle is to share together for the common good whereby the common end shall be achieved. Those two great principles must be part of the basis, in my judgment, of our Theosophical World University. For they are

another way of explaining the word "Theosophical". Unfolding those two essential principles we come to certain others of equal moment in the foundation of our Theosophical World University. First, there follow from these two principles the essential unity of all life. We, as Theosophists, know whether we practise it or not that the world has yet to learn it, and we who are practising that principle must help the world both through precepts and our examples to practise it too. Second, is the beauty of the manifestation of this life, and not only the beauty of life's manifestation but the beauty of its purpose. As my brother has already told you, in most schools we see anything but the beauty side of life. We see the sordid side of it. We see the hard dull side of it, the harsh side of it, the miserable side of it, the despairing side of it—these are associated with education as we have it to-day. They must be replaced by the beauty aspect so that the youngest generation may be able to do that which has been impossible for many of us elders, to grow in beauty. And the third great principle is the recognition of the perfect love and justice whereby the end is achieved, whereby the purpose is realised, the perfect love and justice of nature, of God, whatever term you may give to that divine force, and so we shall see the wonderful, the beautiful, the loving soul of God manifesting in all the kingdoms of nature through the great laws, as for example

of Karma and of Reincarnation and all the other laws through which God's Purpose becomes achieved. Then we must realise in our Theosophical World University that all the ugliness, all the evil, all the cruelty, all the wrong—all these things express the antithesis of that first principle, the growing together. There is no growing where there is ugliness, there is no growing where there is evil, where there is cruelty. There is a stopping-still or even possibly a retrogression. We must grow together and we cannot grow under the influence of ugliness or evil or sordidness or any of those things which make the world mark time, and then we shall recognise, we who are teachers, and help our pupils to recognise the great evolutionary pathway from unconscious to self-conscious unity. The teacher will be able to feel it, sense it, recognise the unity of life in that great evolutionary pathway, and he will be able to draw his pupils nearer, by his own recognition of it, to their understanding of it too. And so the various kingdoms of nature, whether subhuman, human or superhuman, will draw together in that Brotherhood which they do not know to-day. And we shall see how there are five great processes of growth at all of which we are, and at each of which we are too : the process of self-discovery where we begin to know ourselves ; then the expression of that knowledge, such as it is ; then the sacrifice of it to a larger self ; then the complete surrender of

it to the all ; and through that self-surrender the realisation at last of that fundamental all-pervading unity of life. To sum those principles up I would suggest to you to think of these three stages : “ I seek,” “ I find,” “ I share ”. This is the note of the world to-day and the Theosophical World University in all its studies of Art, of Science, in all the curricula which it may adopt, must bear always these three great principles in mind. There must be the continuous seeking, there will be as a result a periodic, perhaps continuous finding. But there will be no fruition either to the seeking or to the finding, save as that follows which is the summation of them both, the sharing with others. And so it is very true to say that only do you truly know that which you freely share, and so we shall have running through all our studies, through all our play, through all our training of the various bodies which as Theosophists we recognise—we shall have running through them the seeking, the finding, and above all the sharing. And then realising these things, as I said before, the kingdoms of nature will be drawn nearer to one another, so that we shall see the Vegetable Kingdom as the fulfilment of the Mineral, the Animal Kingdom as the fulfilment of the Vegetable, the Human Kingdom as the fulfilment of the Animal, and we shall have to put in its rightful place the Superhuman Kingdom as the inevitable and certain fulfilment of the Human, and so shall we see

the great evolutionary ladder of life, rung after rung, leading to the great summit, and on each of the rungs we shall see God's manifested life, One Life, One Source and One Goal. And within that the great Love abides, and the great Law which protects, and so you have there, if I may venture to think so, an outline which needs of course amplification, an outline of the essential principles which the teacher must feel, which the teacher must know, even if he is not able either to feel or to know them fully, but to which his heart must throb, and to the acceptance and living of which it must be his eager endeavour to lead his pupils. Special application of those principles we shall see in certain definite directions.

First, we shall see how these principles tell us that every religion is a pathway to the goal. Not only is every religion a pathway to the goal, but every nation, every race, every community is a pathway too. And each individual, no matter to what faith he belongs, no matter to what nation he belongs, is treading his own appointed pathway to the common end, and hence that fraternisation, comradeship of nations, of religions, for which the Theosophical World University will so emphatically stand.

Emerging from these we shall come to a realisation of the truth given to us yesterday in the ideal and the reality of the great World Religion. We shall also realise that in addition to the possibility for each

one of us, without giving up his own faith, to become a member of the great World Religion, there is the possibility that without giving up his own nationality he can at the same time become, if he will, if he is sufficiently evolved, a world citizen too. It is not enough to be a member of a World Religion. We must be citizens of the world as well as of our respective nationality. The World Religion fulfills the religions and the world citizenship fulfills the nationalities. Our students will not be less patriotic so far as their individual nation is concerned. They will not be less religious so far as their individual faiths are concerned, because we teach them the wider ideals, by the life which shall shine upon them from the wider and all-embracing truth. So we conceive that from our Theosophical World University there will go forth to the world students, citizens, more patriotic, more loving their country than the ordinary students, students more full of eagerness for the truths of their faith than other students, because they seek and strive in some measure to live a larger life in the World Religion and a larger life in the world citizenship.

And so we come gradually to that ideal, not, I would venture to say, of internationalism but rather of super-nationalism, which is a stage beyond. And then we come especially to the Theosophical teacher who will have the privilege of teaching in

this Theosophical World University at one or other of its centres—we trust there will be many scattered all over the world—we come to an understanding by him of what, from the standpoint of education, is that growth of which I spoke at the beginning. That growth from the standpoint of education may be looked upon from two points of view. One of them is already very beautifully put in some of his addresses by our Vice-President, the “release of the God within us”. It becomes the supreme duty of the teacher, the Theosophical teacher recognising that growth does consist in release—it becomes his duty to be the ambassador from the ego, from the soul, from the spirit—whatever name you like to use—from the God within to the bodies which for the time being He has to use in the incarnation with which the teacher is concerned. He is the servant of the soul and the helper of the soul to become the master of the bodies. That is the work of the teacher, and it is the duty, therefore, of the teacher to seek the God within the students and to find that God and to help that God to share His nature with the bodies through which the growth must inevitably take place. So the teacher is the great ambassador, the great helper of the God within. And he will pursue those five great stages which I have already outlined: the discovery; the expression; the leading to sacrifice; and from the sacrifice to the larger sacrifice, the surrender; and

ultimately, as their fulfilment, the realisation. Our study, therefore, of whatever kind will be impressed with the end of service. No study shall be regarded as fruitful save as the student shares it, not merely in the future but in the present, and in that way the older students will share with the younger ones, the younger with those still younger, and all will serve the subhuman kingdoms of nature according to their means and capacity, a great sharing of all with all as a result of the seeking and the finding. Another way of looking at this growth is from the standpoint of transmutation. We have in the world ignorance and doubt, we have in the world fear, we have in the world sorrow, we have in the world indifference. The process of growth consists in the transmutation of those manifestations of the forces misdirected, and so where a teacher sees doubt and ignorance, he will help wisdom to take its place ; where he sees fear he will endeavour to replace it by courage ; where he sees sorrow he will endeavour to replace it by peace, joy and hope ; and where he sees indifference he will endeavour to replace it by enthusiasm. And so wisdom, courage, peace, joy, hope, enthusiasm, these through the alchemy of the dedicated life, precept and example of the teacher—these will drive far away from the world those forces in manifestation which the world should have outgrown, ignorance, fear, sorrow, indifference, doubt. We shall cast away these

outworn garments of darkness and clothe ourselves in the robes of light.

My last point is to lay stress on one more principle of our Theosophical World University, namely, the principle that every student must in our Theosophical World University, in our every centre, be trained to become a leader. Leadership is what the world needs to-day. You go to any country in the world and they say : " Where are the true leaders for us to follow ? " I sometimes say to them : " Why do you not lead yourself ? " And surely it would be well if the world could lead itself. Some of us perhaps can to a certain extent, but even the highest of us say that those who still remain in the outer world of darkness need leadership, and it shall, I trust, be one of the great hopes and ambitions of the Theosophical World University to give to the world leaders who stand not merely for their national duties, who stand not merely as great exponents of their various faiths, but who will stand for true nationalism as well, and will stand for a great World Brotherhood as well, and who will stand also for the great World Religion as the apotheosis of the many faiths at present in the world.

The Coming of the great World-Teacher is the coming of the great Leader of Leaders. Round Him must be gathered lesser leaders to transmit His message. There can be no greater destiny, no higher

hope for the Theosophical World University than that it shall give to Him when He comes those who in faithfulness, in truth, in enthusiasm, in sacrifice, and in utter self-abnegation, shall receive and nobly transmit the message which He brings. No greater privilege for us than that. I hope that, perhaps as a result of this morning's address dedicated to the construction of certain principles of the Theosophical World University, you all will begin to dream dreams about this University, to remember these ideals, to consider them, to try to understand them and follow them, as you can, as you feel able, and to stand uncompromisingly for them and doing that, dreaming your dreams and seeing your views, then I ask you, each one of you, to plan and organise alone, even if you cannot plan and organise together, so that the Theosophical World University may be worthy of Those to whom it owes its inception and may do the work of the Lord upon earth.

III

THE REVIVAL OF THE MYSTERIES

BY

1. THE RT. REV. C. W. LEADBEATER
2. THE RT. REV. J. I. WEDGWOOD

(Saturday, December 26, 1925)

BISHOP C. W. LEADBEATER

FRIENDS :

I am asked to speak upon the question of the revival of the ancient Mysteries. Obviously the first step is to try to understand what it is that we wish to revive. The Mysteries are, I think, very much misunderstood. Not much is to be found in the way of literature on the subject, and what there is, is mainly from the enemies of those Mysteries. The Mysteries were the heart and the centre of all the great religions of the past. We use their own terms when we speak of the Mysteries ; and yet perhaps, with our modern connotation of that word, we are misleading ourselves a little.

Always in each great religion there were teachings which they felt it best not to give out publicly, not to teach except to those who were prepared for the teaching. Now that very idea is itself foreign to the present age. It is now considered, and in a certain way quite rightly considered, the duty of a scientific man to publish his results. If he discovers anything new about Nature in any of the varied branches of science, it is held that he ought to put the result of

his discoveries at the disposal of his fellowmen. In one way that is a beautiful and a noble idea, because you will observe that the scientific man who makes the researches practically never gets any monetary result ; he gets, perhaps, the reward of fame but not usually anything more substantial. That is as it should be.

But there is another side to it, and that other side arises from the selfishness of the average man. You know quite well how all sorts of wonderful chemical discoveries were used in the Great War—used certainly not for the helping of mankind, but for the destruction of mankind. I am not criticising that. I fully recognise that when there was the war, it was for many people a duty to fight, even as Shri Krishna told Arjuna to fight. I am not criticising that. But I point out the fact that to put many and often very tremendous discoveries at the disposal of anybody and everybody is not always for the good of the race as a whole.

These ancient Mysteries, although they were the heart of the great religions, were by no means only religious. You will obtain a better general idea of those Mysteries if you regard them as an organised system of culture for the people, for those who wished to take advantage of that. You heard a great deal yesterday about education, and about some of the mistakes which we all feel are being made in

connection with modern education. But one of the greatest mistakes that we make was, I think, not mentioned, and that is the very curious idea that education ends with the school and the college, that when you have once obtained what they call a good education, your time of learning is over. Well, it is not. On the contrary, all wise men continue to learn all their lives long in one way or another. But we in these modern days recognise that only very slightly. There are such things as night schools, for example, where the working man after his day of work is over may go and improve himself in various ways, if he has any strength left or any power of attention left after the day's labour. There are also University extension lectures for those who wish to improve themselves. But all these are for the few only; and the vast majority of our people make no organised attempt to carry on education after they leave the school. That was not so in those older days.

The main function of what were called the Mysteries, as regards the ordinary people who joined them, was to carry on their education. The Mysteries were first of all a great system of training, and they treated not exclusively religious subjects. On the contrary, they taught their pupils the various physical sciences. In Ancient Egypt, for example, they made a very great point of Chemistry. Perhaps you know that that very word "Chemistry" is derived from

“Khem” which was the native name of Egypt. They did not call it Egypt but called it “Khem”. Because they were so proficient in Chemistry, the science was called after the country. You would be much surprised, if you were to take up the study of their ancient work and culture, to find how very much they knew of what we call modern science. Just to give you one example of it, I may tell you that the ancient Egyptians knew a very great deal about Astronomy, which we in Europe have acquired only within the last few generations comparatively. When I was a boy at school, they taught me that the distance from the earth to the sun was 960 million miles. That was as near as they could get seventy years ago. Later on in 1874 and 1882, there occurred what is called the transit of the planet Venus across the face of the sun. That is one of the ways in which they calculate the distance of the sun. Having better instruments than when it had occurred 120 years earlier, they calculated the distance more accurately, and they brought it down to 93½ million miles. I remember that being announced by Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons as a great and interesting discovery. There are several other methods of calculating that distance. If you look at the latest edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, you will find that they have brought down that distance to 92,900,000 miles.

The ancient Egyptians at least 6,000 years ago had recorded that distance in the Great Pyramid. You may not have heard that the Great Pyramid was a record in stone—as they fondly hoped, an imperishable record—of certain great facts in Nature which they had discovered. One of these was the distance of the sun. Their record of that distance, when reduced to the English measurement, comes to within 2,000 miles of our latest measurement. Therefore, they were then very much more accurate than we were fifty, sixty or seventy years ago. We are only just beginning to be as accurate as that ancient people were. That is, you know, a very interesting fact. That is not alone. There are many others. They measured the earth more accurately than we have done, until within the last twenty or thirty years. In many ways they knew the exact length of the solar and the sidereal year and the difference between them. And except University professors, I very much doubt whether any of you know it even in this twentieth century. They were exceedingly scientific and accurate, and so they had a great deal to teach to their pupils.

Their education of their pupils was very common-sense, as well as very scientific. They taught their pupils what they thought was of the greatest importance to them. Now, I am afraid, that is another drawback of our modern education. First of all we

teach children a vast number of things that are of no practical use to them. I do not say that it is not a good thing, that, for instance, we in England have to study the classics and to learn ancient Greek with great accuracy. But I do say that there are a number of other things which are of more importance for a growing boy. It is very well, no doubt, to be able to pass an examination; and a vast amount of time and trouble, and pain and suffering too, is devoted to coaching a boy to pass examinations. It seems to me that very little time is devoted to try to teach him to be an honourable man, a loyal and upright and unselfish citizen, and I should think that to be of infinitely greater importance than Greek or mathematics. But that is not part of our modern system.

But it was a part of the system taught in the Mysteries. They considered, both in the Greek Mysteries and in the Egyptian, that the first and most important thing to teach any man was how to live, and why he should live in a particular way and not in any other way. Therefore, first of all they taught him the great rules of ethics. Now you may say that every religion teaches that in the present day. Yes, it does. But mostly, if they condescend in religion to give any reason at all for teaching, it is simply: "Thus saith the Lord, and you must do it". Well and good, as far as it goes. But in the ancient

Mysteries, they explained to you, as Theosophy does now, precisely why you should act in certain ways. They taught the great law of cause and effect, and they explained to you precisely why you must live unselfishly, why you must keep the path of rectitude and honour and honesty, and showed you precisely the results that would follow for you and for the community if you did not follow that straight line. Now you see at once that it is much more likely that a man will remember what he is taught if the whole thing is explained to him, if the reason is given, if the consequences are made clear.

Then, having taught the basis of ethics and explained the reason for it, the next step was to explain to the man the conditions of his life after what you call death. The theory which lay behind it was : " We have here a man whom we are going to educate. We will educate him with a view to the life that lies before him, both while he has a physical body and after he has laid that aside." There were no arguments in those ancient days about the survival of man after death, because the idea was universally accepted. I am told that here in India even in those ancient days you had a very materialistic school of thought, that of the Chārvakas, as one of your systems of philosophy. There were very few who held such ideas in Ancient Egypt, because the facts of life after death seemed somehow much nearer to those people.

They lived, I think, much nearer to Nature, both in Ancient Greece and in Ancient Egypt, than we do in Europe in the present day, so that there was very little materialism, if any at all. The teaching was perfectly definite because those who taught, *i.e.*, the men who passed into the higher grades of the Mysteries, had themselves personal experience of all that they were explaining to the pupils, and so they could, of course, speak with far greater confidence than many religious teachers can in these present days. Their theory was : " There are accidents ; there is sickness ; this pupil of ours may die any day. It is therefore imperatively necessary that he should know what to do when death comes to him." And therefore, a prominent part of the teaching in the various stages of the Mysteries related to his life immediately after death.

Those of you who happen to be Freemasons will know that something of that ancient teaching of the Mysteries has been handed down into the ritual of that wonderful Brotherhood. So it happened that, in the earlier stages of those Mysteries, a great deal was taught about the life immediately after death. All the teaching in the Mysteries was illustrated for the pupils, as far as possible. In the older days, when what we call psychic powers were more widely spread and developed, they constantly threw before their pupils materialised representations of what happened on the other side of death. When such powers were

less common, they represented, by drama in various ways, scenes connected with the after-death life. They had trained actors to show in that way the result of certain methods of life. Later on still, they used figures, marionettes and representations of various kinds. But always they used the power of illustration, whether by picture or by acting or by the more occult method of materialising things, for the pupils to see; always they illustrated their teaching and thereby impressed it far more deeply on the pupils. You all know that to some extent the child is a lover of pictures. It is not necessarily childish; it is quite a good and beautiful thing. It persists with us, and nearly all of us feel that illustrations and diagrams are of distinct help to us when we are dealing with a new or difficult subject. I always feel that myself. If I make a diagram of something new, I seem to understand it better, and be able to relate it to other knowledge which I have. They made great use of that in the ancient Mysteries.

There were always stages. They had two grades in the Mysteries of Greece—the Lesser and the Greater. In Egypt the thing was divided into three stages—the Mysteries of Isis, Serapis and Horus. How long a candidate remained in any one of those stages depended chiefly upon himself. They had what I suppose we must call examinations, although they were very different from the very unpleasant functions to which we give

that name in the present day. No man passed on from one stage of these Mysteries to another, unless he had given full proof of his proficiency in the earlier degrees.

Now there is another matter of great importance with regard to the Mysteries, and that is that though all knew of the existence of the Mysteries, the knowledge of their secrets was not possessed by everybody. Just as you all know now the existence of the body called Freemasonry, but do not know its secrets—and will not unless you join it ; just as you all know that there is such a thing and, if found a satisfactory candidate, you can join it if you wish, just so in those older countries the existence of the Mysteries was in no way concealed, but only their teachings, and even then only some of the teachings. Those which were hidden were hidden because it was felt that it was not wise to put dynamite in the hands of a child. And that is what it comes to. If you give control over Nature—control which is gained only by knowledge and by study of the powers of Nature—into the hands of ignorant and selfish men, your world as a whole will not be the better, but the worse, for it.

So, always there was an inner Mystery behind the outer—I do not mean the difference between the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries. The latter was, so far as religion was concerned, largely a difference between making a very exhaustive study of the astral

conditions coming immediately after death, and a similar study of the conditions of a later stage which we now call "the heaven world". That was one great characteristic difference between the Lesser Mysteries and the Greater. But behind both of them alike, there was an inner school, admission into which was not a question of application, but of selection by the priests who were in charge of those schools. They chose from among the candidates the pupils whom they thought, or perhaps saw, to be safe men who could be entrusted with practical secrets. There is a sight of the soul as well as a sight of the body, and by that sight of the soul one can obtain a very great deal more information about life and death and Nature than can be obtained by purely physical investigation. That can be taught and it was taught. But most emphatically, it is necessary that before any instruction is given the man shall have proved himself to be a worthy candidate.

The secret of that inner side of the Mysteries was so well kept, that not even the initiates of the Mysteries knew that there was any inner teaching before they received the special invitation to pass into that inner shrine. That was very necessary in those days, because for example, there were Roman Emperors with powers of life and death which they never hesitated to use, and some of them might come and insist on being admitted into all the Mysteries.

And they could not be admitted, because they were not fit. The priests said truly : " You cannot argue with a master of many legions." So the existence of this real inner teaching was not known except to those who received it. That is the real reason in the background why the title *Mysteries* was given to this system of education.

Do not forget what I said at the beginning, namely, that these things were not labelled as being exclusively religious at all. But at the same time, because those Nations were wise enough to be religious people on the whole, just as you here in India are on the whole a religious race, so religion took a very prominent part in the teaching which they gave. And unquestionably it would be a good thing indeed for us, if we were able to revive that ancient system of culture. It would have to be modified somewhat to suit the present conditions. I cannot see how in our hurried modern civilisation we can find time for these things. I may tell you one little interesting story. When first I came out to India, naturally enough our Indian brothers at the Headquarters here were a little reserved with a man coming from quite another civilisation, and with very different ways and habits. But gradually by degrees I was able to convince them that I was in real sympathy with their thought and their feeling, and then they began to unfold a little. They were too polite even then

to tell me what they really thought about Europeans. But at any rate one very characteristic question was asked me by an Indian friend when he found that he could trust me. He said : “ But when do you people really live ? You are always in a hurry and driving about madly. You never have time to sit and think and live.” I thought there was a great deal of truth in it. I am going to turn over to my brother Wedgwood the very much more difficult task of telling you how you can revive all the Mysteries under modern conditions.

BISHOP J. I. WEDGWOOD

FRIENDS :

I feel that I had better begin by making clear to you the limits that I propose to mark out for myself in dealing with the fascinating subject which we are to consider this morning. It would be presumptuous were I to attempt to tell you what the Mysteries will be like in the future or in what form they are going to be revived, for that frankly I do not myself know. Rather than speculate upon those things—things which are still hidden in the heart of the world among the secrets to be disclosed as the great Plan of evolution unfolds itself—I think it will be more useful to discuss how we can best work together in the immediate future so as to prepare the world for the restoration of the Mysteries.

It is clear that under the conditions of modern life that work of restoration will be exceedingly difficult. And yet many of us, who in these days are called upon to work in this great Theosophical movement, are the very people who were privileged to take part in the Mysteries of antiquity. It is to be hoped that we have not slipped backwards in evolution in

the lives that have intervened, but rather have qualified ourselves to work more effectively. Perhaps it is less the capacity to do the work needed of us that is lacking, than the training for that work and the right attitude of mind towards it. People who have studied the occult history of the past sometimes wonder why it is that ancient civilisations, such as those of Egypt and Chaldæa, seem to have transcended ours in occult knowledge and in the ability to control the forces of nature. The question naturally arises whether we ought not to have progressed, and whether, if reincarnation be true, later civilisations ought not to reach higher in the attainment of knowledge than those that preceded them. The answer to this is that evolution seems to be carried on in periodic cycles, one cycle beginning below the high-water mark of achievement of the earlier one, then eventually reaching further ; but also that the knowledge that we associate with Ancient Egypt and Chaldæa never was possessed by the generality of the people, but was the prerogative of those more advanced souls who were then able to live amongst their fellows to a degree which became impossible in later more materialistic generations. I feel sure that we have amongst us many who could do useful and valuable work along the lines of the Mystery tradition, but much in the attitude of modern thought towards these subjects has to be discarded and many

things still hidden from our ordinary perception have to be learned, before this work can seriously be taken in hand and begun.

We are often told that the Mysteries formed the heart of every great religion in the past, and the first step towards the gaining of this attitude of mind of which I have been speaking is to have a clear understanding of religion and of the purpose that it is intended to serve. Every great religion has three main directions in which it operates upon those whom it helps. There are the departments of philosophy, of morality, and thirdly of worship. It is part of the work of religion to explain to man the purpose of his existence, why he is in the world, what he is intended to do, his relationships with the world around him, with his fellowmen and with the Deity from whom he derives his existence. All that teaching ought to be summed up in the philosophy of religion; for just as when a man goes into a strange city, he can do little before he can find his way about the streets of the city, so also before we can accomplish our purpose in life we must understand our place in the world in which we live and what exactly we are intended to do. One is bound to say that very little of this teaching has come down to us in Christianity, so that in the western world the answers to these questions have largely to be drawn from the works of contemporary philosophers, who

not infrequently give us the wisdom of man rather than the Wisdom of God. It is along these lines, so it seems to me, that Hinduism makes its richest and most lasting contribution to western thought.

Secondly, there is the department of morality. In all great religions there are laws of conduct for mankind. Those who have trodden the path ahead of us have left behind them certain signposts to guide us in the treading of the path, and if we are wise we profit by their experience. That, of course, is the basis of those laws of morality which are of fundamental and universal application, as distinguished from those which are merely temporary and local. On these two departments of religion I do not propose this morning to dwell, but I want to ask you especially to consider the third great stream of influence through which a religion affects its followers ; I mean what is called its form or manner of worship.

Occultism has been defined by H. P. Blavatsky as the study of the Divine Mind working in nature. That which is so tremendously useful in the Theosophical explanation of life is that it gives to us an ordered system of thought, in which the facts and experiences of life readily sort themselves out into their natural places. Few people have any clear understanding of what they mean by the terms of speech they employ. In the ~~mind of the ordinary~~ **THE H. C. U. UNIVER.**

Christian the word "religion" would conjure up a set of mental impressions and associations connected with going to church, goodness, worship of God, eternal salvation and so forth. The serious student has to look deeper than all this, and in his philosophy or system of life the various things that he does have to serve some clearly defined purpose. In the search for reality beneath all the superficial aspect of life, etymology can act as a very useful guide. Particularly is this so, because it often will carry us back to a meaning and conception of things which were prevalent before the age of materialism caused so many words to lose their true signification. It is not at all a bad plan to begin the preparation of a lecture upon any given subject by looking up the etymology of its technical terms.

Now the word "religion" is usually held to be derived from the Latin "religere," meaning to bind back. The bearing of this idea will become plain if we reflect that it is the essential purpose of religion to bind man back to the source of his being, to lead him to discover the Divine Principle within himself. This process of binding back should be operative on all planes of a man's being, and in the broadest sense of the word, all those influences which make for the well-being and healthy development of his various bodies—including the physical body—can rightly be classed as religious.

The same idea underlies and rightly explains the forms of worship belonging to each religion, that is to say, the body of rites and ceremonies appertaining to its tradition. We sing in a well-known Christian hymn of being "far from my heavenly home," and Hinduism tells how we live in a world of illusion, glamourised by the great heresy of separateness.

"By death I shall escape from death
And life eternal gain,"

says another Christian hymn. We have forgotten our own inner Divinity, or, to borrow from another tradition, "the Word has been lost" and men are thereby cast into confusion and disorder. It is to rescue us from this confusion that religion exists, and while its philosophy is to enlighten our minds and its morality to guide our actions, its ceremonies are designed so to uplift our consciousness as to bring us into touch with the sources of life and power within ourselves, and eventually to lead us to the recovery of the Lost Word and the unveiling of the Hidden Light of our inner Divinity. There are occasions within the experience of all of us when the higher consciousness is opened and we know ourselves as greater and far grander than that with which we normally identify ourselves. The ceremonies of religions are to help us to direct our thoughts, our emotions, our aspirations, towards higher things, so that these higher modes of consciousness grow more

and more frequent, until eventually they become normal and permanent. There is a science of training the thoughts and emotions and of dealing with our states of consciousness, which was better understood by the wise people of old than it is in these days. Seen from this point of view, the ceremonies of the various religions have a definite value and purpose, and are founded on strictly scientific principles.

Theosophy makes its own contribution to the elucidation of religious philosophy and ethic, though in both these departments of thought one can go reasonably far without having to use the key of Theosophy to unlock further recesses of knowledge ; but in the understanding of religious ceremonial, we can advance nowhere without the aid of Theosophy. The ceremonies are unintelligible so long as they are studied solely in relation to the physical plane ; and with the advance of science, thousands of people have ceased to practise the faith of their forefathers because its ceremonies were thought to be meaningless and were relegated, therefore, to the category of superstition. The extended view of man that Theosophy gives to us enables one to understand that the ceremonies may call into activity higher forces of nature which affect the higher constituents of man's being. It is difficult, for example, to defend the ceremony of ordination in the Christian Church so long as it is regarded only as a symbolical setting

apart of the man for the spiritual service of his fellows. There is much that is beautiful in such a symbolism, but if that were the whole of its content, it should be framed in different language. But if through the working of the outer ceremony changes are wrought in the inner nature of the man, and the spiritual power, which effects those changes and flows from the bishop to the candidate, opens within the latter channels through which higher forces can work for the performance of his ministerial duties, then the ceremony takes new shape before our eyes and it is seen to be instinct with life and reason.

What really lies behind most objections to ceremony is the fact that not being based exclusively on the logic of the physical plane, it is not understood by those who live in a materialistic age and recognise only physical causes and effects. Until the man in the street recognises the existence of the higher worlds and that the human being belongs to those higher worlds as well as to the physical plane, the ceremonies will remain for him a closed book. When people say they do not like ceremonies, they mean really that they do not like certain ceremonies—and ought in most cases to add, because they do not understand them. It is impossible to escape from ceremony, for ceremony is the utilisation of form, and while we live in the manifested universe, spirit must express itself through form. Not until we can escape from

manifestation and transcend the final duality of matter and spirit, can we dispense with ceremony. Our every action is a ceremony, and even the Quaker, whose particular belief it is to dispense with religious rites and ceremonies, has only succeeded in substituting one kind of ceremony for another. A morning coat is no less a vestment than an officer's uniform, and the giving of a public lecture is as much a ceremony having its own rules and procedure as a prayer gathering or the meeting of a Masonic Lodge. Among Theosophists certain colours are considered an adornment of the higher bodies ; on the principle of correspondences it may sometimes be desirable to wear them on the physical plane. There is no especial sanctity in black. It is all a question of choice, and the true science of ceremonial consists, first of all in determining and clearly understanding what has to be done, and then in choosing and employing a form which shall best direct the life forces to the appointed end.

I have devoted this much time to putting before you the place that religion ought to occupy in the scheme of human life, because it seems to me that the recognition of all this is a necessary precursor to the revival of the Mysteries. Before we can act wisely and efficiently we must understand clearly the part of the Plan that is given us to accomplish. We stand at a time of the world's history when the opportunities

opening up before us would seem to be almost unparalleled. First of all, there is the imminent Coming of the World-Teacher, with all the tremendous pressure of evolution that that entails, the hastening of many changes and the welling up of fresh streams of spiritual life ; secondly, we have the coming into existence of the new sub-race, itself the prototype and promise of a new Root-Race ; and thirdly, the influence of a new ray, the seventh, affecting the world. We have been told very little on the subject of the rays, but it would seem as though the period in which each ray in turn dominates the world is not necessarily a long one. The blending of racial influence and that of the rays is an exceedingly interesting study. It is possible, for example, to see the influence of the fifth, or intellectual, ray tempering the emotional fervour of the fourth, or Celtic, sub-race in Greece. Next we trace the devotional energy of the sixth ray giving great impetus and driving power to the mixture of fourth and fifth sub-races in Europe, tending also at times to extremes of fanaticism and superstition. Now we can see signs of the growing influence of the seventh ray, and can already picture to ourselves how the intellectuality of the fifth sub-race which seeks to understand things, and the intuitional and co-operative characteristics to be developed in the sixth will affect its special work. It would be a mistake to envisage the seventh ray as expressing itself simply in a

tendency to wear pretty colours and unintelligently to exaggerate ceremonial. The rays are big and tremendous realities in the scheme of things, but they are too often degraded to the level of our own low mentalities. One special characteristic of seventh ray work is the linking up of the different planes of nature and the establishment of connections between them. What is called psychic development, in the serious sense of the term, has special affinity with this ray. Another distinguishing characteristic is the co-operation with the deva evolution and other kingdoms of nature. Yet another is the inclination to regard selected physical objects and different combinations of form in a symbolical or sacramental aspect; for as the first ray corresponds to the ātmic principle, the second to the buddhic, and so on, so does the seventh in its turn correspond to the physical element in man; hence the tendency to spiritualise physical objects in so far as they can be made vehicles or transmitters of spiritual power. It would seem that the Mysteries as an institution belong especially to the activity of this ray. Bishop Leadbeater has told us that it was the Chohan of the seventh ray who was the inner head of the Mysteries in Egypt.

How, then, are we to work for the restoration of the Mysteries? Most of you are aware that the World-Teacher indicated a few years ago three activities which might be regarded as specially

preparing for His Coming ; namely, the Theosophical educational movement, the Liberal Catholic Church, and the Co-Masonic Order. These three movements have established themselves more or less firmly since they were first brought into our midst ; many of our members have worked whole-heartedly for them ; and now we are able to see a further expansion of that original hint in the three movements taking shape among us which form the subject of these Convention lectures ; namely, the World Religion, the Theosophical World University and the Restoration of the Mysteries. The Liberal Catholic Church, however imperfectly it may as yet have been realised, does in fact represent a new “ Reformation ” in Christianity, and may, I think, claim to have been built upon a sounder foundation than that earlier Reformation which substituted for an infallible Church the doubtful advantage of an infallible Book. But it is not alone in Christianity that we must look for pruning and disencumbrance. If the Mysteries, which once formed the heart of every great religion, are to be restored in those great faiths, as seems not unlikely, then there must be a similar movement in each of them, and it is from the storehouse of wisdom garnered in the Theosophical Society that the reforming movements must derive their inspiration and guidance, as has the Liberal Catholic Church. The Mysteries will very likely grow out of these inner schools in

each of the great religions, though there will perhaps be also a blending from other lines of the Mystery tradition, say, for example, from Freemasonry. A very interesting and promising beginning has been made in the *Bhārata Samāj* founded here in the interests of a purified and reconstructed Hinduism. So far, I believe, Christianity has been the only one of the great religions utilising the principle of united congregational worship, though in other faiths there have been periodic assemblages of the faithful as, for example, in the case of pilgrimages and various festivals in Hinduism. Still, nothing quite on the same principle as the Christian scheme has hitherto been attempted. It may not be out of place to prophesy that with the spread of education and the growth of intelligence among the people, this method may be put into operation in the other religions, having more especially in mind the tendency to co-operation and united working which is the precursor of the new sub-race.

If we are to labour together to make possible the re-establishment of the Mysteries, the first thing to be aimed at in all departments of our work is far greater efficiency. The World-Teacher said at the time when He commended the three movements to us that Theosophists should lead the way in all these things ; that the Theosophical lecture should be a pattern, so to speak, both as to how a lecture should be delivered

and with what subjects it might most profitably deal ; and that Theosophists should give a living demonstration of the right principles in education, in the workings of the Christian Church and of Freemasonry. Evidently there is room for enormous improvement in the quality of our Theosophical lectures. They are as yet far from being a pattern or model of what a lecture should be. We have no right to expect the re-establishment of the Mysteries before we are able to bring much greater efficiency into both our Church services and our Masonic ritual. It is idle for us to talk about Theosophists leading the way in these things unless we are really able to do them better than other people. Our first task, then, is to gain all the understanding of our work that Theosophy puts within our reach ; and then to carry our knowledge into execution with every bit as much efficiency as people in the outside world can display. " Efficiency and yet again efficiency ! " may well be taken as our motto.

Without our having fully realised what has been taking place, the work of preparing for the Mysteries has been going on within the Theosophical movement for some time past. One very important feature in the plan of this work that is being realised is the establishment of spiritual centres in various parts of the world. Many different ideals are combined in such a centre. In the first place, something of the community life is involved. By this I do not mean

that people are necessarily to live under the same roof or hold everything in common, for opinions may differ as to how far it is possible in the present state of things to carry such an ideal into successful execution. In occultism people are subject to rapid change, and sometimes compress into one incarnation the progress—with all its attendant variety of scope, and the outgrowing of environment and human relationships—which would otherwise be distributed over several incarnations. But our work is increasingly moving in the direction of co-operation, and the Mysteries demand a community of ideal and united action on the part of a number of specially trained people. On this point I shall touch later, but in passing may I draw your attention to one further consideration? There is one thing which it seems to me is in practice essential to the success of any such community life, and that is the centring of the community around the expression of some religious ideal. Most communities break up and go to pieces on the rock of personal intrigue, jealousy and animosity. Under the very best of conditions, it is difficult to keep people with their eyes fixed upon the bright and morning star of their hope, serenely poised above the pettinesses of the lower personality. But it is a far more feasible proposition if there is in the midst of the community some form of religious worship which by its majesty and unifying power is able to turn the

hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and drawing people out of their smaller selves can help them continually to see the daily life *sub specie eternitatis*. One cannot say that the monastic communities who enjoyed this privilege have always been a success ; but at least they have managed to endure, some of them through centuries of existence, whereas I cannot think of any community founded only on the bond of social service whose existence has been other than short-lived and chequered.

For the training of those who are going to take part in the Mysteries, schools of the Mysteries are needed. If we ask ourselves the question : “ In what do the Mysteries consist ? ” we shall see that, as in the case of religion, they are designed to work upon their pupils from various directions. I think that in their essence they exist for the purpose of conferring initiations—greater or lesser—that is to say, for bringing about fundamental changes of consciousness in the candidates who undergo the process of initiation. It is a process by which, to quote the words of Subba Rao, “ the Adept directs through the chela occult forces which enable him to obtain prematurely, so to speak, knowledge of his spiritual nature, and to obtain powers to which he is not morally entitled by degree of his progress.”¹ In other words, the

¹ *A Collection of Esoteric Writings of T. Subba Rao, F.T.S., B.A., B.L., Bombay, 1917, p. 314.*

initiation looses within him some of those sovereign powers belonging to the inmost spiritual nature, and so enables him to leap forward over a definite stage in evolution. But in order that this may be accomplished with safety, very careful preparation and suitable environment are required. Consequently, the centres of the Mysteries must also provide schools where the requisite training and preparation can be carried out, and where the surroundings are favourable to the process taking place. Bishop Leadbeater has been telling us that the Mysteries of old were centres of cultural training and instruction. There can be no doubt that the centres now to be established must provide similar training for the various vehicles. Many of you have been privileged to see the exercises in physical culture which my friend, Mr. Jack Burton, has been demonstrating at Adyar within the past few weeks, and which seem to me to be examples of an exceedingly pleasant and well-balanced eurythmical exercise. The physical body is one of the vehicles which we have to use, and its working efficiency can be greatly improved by rhythmical and harmonious movement. Turning to the emotions, it is unfortunate that the education of the present devotes comparatively little attention to their training. And so we find that many young people grow up with strong emotions, and with no understanding of how to open up those higher channels in the astral and mental bodies through which that

emotional power and its attendant thoughts can express themselves. Too often they find their normal outlet through lower channels. It is the function of art to lift the consciousness to higher levels by developing in man the appreciation of beauty, and if people could learn to be really beautiful within they would necessarily become good. Further, as it is an essential duty of religion to give philosophic and moral instruction, so also must the schools of the Mysteries aim at superimposing upon the ordinary philosophical and scientific education of the day the sacred Para-Brahma-vidyā, called in these days Theosophy ; and, moreover, teach their adepts to be good citizens.

I spoke just now of favourable outer conditions. The schools, if they are to do their work properly, cannot be carried on in large cities, for it is of the essence of this work that it should be done in close accord with nature. Ordinary education and ordinary worship can be carried on amid the bustle of a town, but the special training of the Mysteries, which has for its object the opening up of the higher reaches of consciousness, is so delicate and sensitive a process that it can only be successfully accomplished in the purer surroundings of nature. There are healing and revivifying forces in nature upon which people can draw to counteract the strain and disharmony caused by our modern civilisation. As the influence of the seventh ray becomes increasingly perceptible during

its period of dominance over the world, humanity will naturally move into closer relationship with the deva evolution. In the centre which has recently been founded at Huizen in Holland, we hope by degrees to establish a school where people can prepare themselves for this special work ; but there also exists in that place (and I dare say the same thing applies to other centres) a school of training for the angels themselves. The intensification of seventh ray work renders necessary a preparation on the part of the angels as well as on the part of human beings. All properly designed ceremonial works largely through their aid and co-operation, and it would seem that the participation in such work is one field of evolution for them, as it is also for us.

I come now to the last point in what I have to say to you this morning about the work that we can do to prepare for the restoration of the Mysteries. It is the all-important question of co-operation, the key-note of the age to be. The Christ who is coming has as His special characteristic that reflection of Himself in the sixth principle of man which we call buddhi—unity. Again, it is the sixth sub-race, with the same special emphasis, that is to be born. And, once more, the work of the seventh ray involves not only united action on the part of human beings, but also co-operation with the angels. Could there be a more striking lesson ? The idea is familiar to all of you that

the earlier evolution of mankind has as its purpose the building up of the man into a strong centre of individuality. The earliest law of human progress is that of competition in the struggle for the survival of the fittest. So, as we come to the stage of spiritual adolescence, we find ourselves often prone to individualistic action and are still apt to think of the outside world mainly in terms of how it affects *us*. This tendency towards selfishness, or self-centredness, as the case may be, shews itself continually through many different indications in daily life. It is one of the difficulties which has to be surmounted before ceremonies can be properly performed. For example, ordinary untrained people who are asked to take part in a religious or Masonic procession have no idea of moving together. Those who are at the head often move on too fast, without any thought of what those who are following are doing. Gaps soon occur, and other irregularities, just because ordinary untrained people are much more in the habit of turning their thoughts inwards upon themselves than of acting in relation to other people. Such a procession is intended to create and to direct a quantity of force on the physical, astral and mental planes ; and this is to be used for preparing and marking out the field of operations, or for other purposes, according to its place in the ceremony. People usually direct their forces forwards from the front of the body,

consequently those who are highest in rank come in the rear of the procession, in order that they may work through and intensify the efforts of the others. If the procession gets broken and the people do not move at regular distances, a leakage of force occurs.

Not until the officers of a ceremony can learn to work together in this way and maintain right relationship with each other, can proper results be gained. If one officer is weak and halting in his ritual, he debases the whole level of the ceremony, somewhat on the principle that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link—though, fortunately, in this case the law of averages probably applies more truly. There are great ceremonies in Freemasonry where the seven ritual officers are made to represent and personify the seven principles of man, and in turn the five planes. We know in our own experience how unsatisfactory is the result if our different bodies are not properly correlated with one another; for example, if the physical body is sick or depleted of vitality and unable properly to express the thought and feeling, to say nothing of the spiritual powers, of the man. We can readily see that in the ceremony referred to, it will never do for any one of the officers to be self-centred or inward-turned. They must study one another and learn such perfect co-operation that the different parts of this living machine work together in close and perfect apposition and collaboration. They

must move in obedience to a single will and, to quote a well-known scripture, "be to one another as the fingers of one hand." Now it is seldom that in any ritual this degree of co-operation is attained—most people in fact never dream that it should exist—and yet such collaboration lies at the very beginning of all the higher ceremonial work and is essential, not only physically, but also in emotion and thought, if the ceremony is really to express what it is intended to express. And yet, if once this can be attained, the way is opened to all sorts of interesting possibilities. In properly constructed ceremonial, as the working moves stage by stage towards its appointed end, the various participants should be able to rise from the separated personal consciousness, and blend themselves into a form of collective consciousness, which, when developed and more fully realised, is the exercise of the buddhic faculty. As a first step, whatever has to be uttered should be spoken in one sense, it is true, as an individual contribution to the whole, but also as representing the body corporate. Each individual member, and in a greater degree each officer, is, so to speak, one aspect or facet of this body corporate, and in his individual utterance is the mouthpiece of that collective unity. Through one officer the Lodge expresses itself as strength, through another as wisdom, through another as beauty ; or through one as the higher mind, through

another as the lower mind. Working on this plan, the student may learn to soar into the realms of the higher consciousness and not only to know himself as one with his brethren, but also by an extension of the process to blend the collective human consciousness as it is wielded by himself and his fellows with that of the devas, who also are assisting in the ceremony and carrying out their special duties in its accomplishment.

Another thought, which to me is most inspiring, emerges from this chain of ideas. It is this. Many of us who look for the near return of the World-Teacher to bless and instruct His world have thought of Him as likely to occupy during His outer ministry among us the body of a disciple—perhaps other bodies also, in a subordinate degree. This may and, I personally believe, will be the case. But there is another way in which we can look for the Coming of the Teacher, and it is that He will manifest Himself through groups of human beings who will form for Him, as it were, a number of collective vehicles. After all, that is one of the principal functions, from the esoteric standpoint, of all great organisations in regard to the purpose for which they exist. People are drawn together into such an organisation in order that they may give embodiment to the forces ensoul-
ing the special ideas which the organisation exists to promulgate; and its members form a body not only as regards the physical plane but, in proportion to

their devotion and to the intensity and earnestness of their thought, also upon higher planes. The Christian Church and the Theosophical Society are both good examples of this principle. The body is effective in proportion as it works self-consciously, being aware of its mission, and with singleness of purpose. Many of us have been feeling that since our President, now several years ago, first made the announcement of the near Coming of the Lord of Love, His Influence has increasingly been pouring out upon the world, and that in a certain sense He may be said already to have come to the outer world through the Theosophical Society and the Order of the Star in the East, as well as through some other organisations. It seems to me that one way in which His Coming may eventually be realised is through a tremendous intensification of the work of those organisations already existing and striving to prepare the world for His Message. It is not, I trust, presumptuous for you and for me to hope that we may be privileged to help in building up such vehicles for His Life and Power, which He may find it possible to use both now and when He comes out into the world. And if much of my own work and enthusiasm turn in the direction of the ceremonial method, it is because I realise how immense and far-reaching are the possibilities which open before its right performance. As physical bodies differ from one another in worth and

in the ability to express the life of the Divine Spirit, so do the forms that we build up through the practice of ceremonial. If the Mysteries are to be re-established in the near future, we must learn to create forms worthy to be used, and we can do that only by first developing and training our powers to the highest extent of their capacity and then using those powers without thought of self in the service of the Great Ones.

IV

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMING
HALF CENTURY

BY

ANNIE BESANT

(Sunday, December 27, 1925)

DR. ANNIE BESANT

FRIENDS :

This, the fourth lecture of the regular course of lectures delivered at the Theosophical Anniversary each year, is to look forward more than backward. I want, after a very brief explanation of that which led up to the present position, to try as far as is practicable to outline the general course of the movements which have been described to you in the first, the second and the third of the lectures delivered in this place.

The Theosophical Society, as you know, is celebrating its fiftieth year. In 1875 the Society was founded. At that time, H. P. Blavatsky and Henry Steele Olcott frankly and constantly proclaimed that the Society had inner Founders, the real Founders, behind the outer messengers who founded and led it in our physical world. The great organiser was our President-Founder, Henry Steele Olcott; the great teacher was H. P. Blavatsky, ringing out the message to our world from the Occult Hierarchy, that "company of just men made perfect" which sends out age after age as its Supreme Messenger,

the Bodhisattva, the great Being who is spoken of as the Founder of all the Religions of the World.

There was no kind of shrinking from this position. H. P. Blavatsky stated quite frankly that she came in order to bring that message from the East which has characterised for some centuries past the fourth quarter of every century—the ending of the third quarter and the beginning of the fourth. Under those conditions she, in constant communication with her own Teacher, worked under His direction, and in the outer world of organisation (not the world of teaching) she was faithfully helped by her colleague Colonel Olcott. That went on for some ten years. They came over, as you know, from the United States to India and founded here in Adyar the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society. Then in 1885 there came a violent attack on her, accusing her of fraud and deception. In that attack, although her character was cleared—if one may venture to use such a word of so great a personage—by a number of members on the spot, led by the late Sir S. Subramania Iyer, one of the greatest judges who have adorned the Madras High Court, to help the Society she left India and went to Europe. She had had the hope of returning here ; but that day did not dawn for her.

She then made a statement, very clear and definite, as to the changed relation of the members of the Occult

Hierarchy to the Theosophical Society. It had been originally founded in three sections : the first, of the Members of that Hierarchy who took part in the founding ; the second, of the pupils of H. P. Blavatsky under instruction by her and being guided so far as was practicable to come into touch with the Teachers Themselves ; and the third, of the ordinary members of the Theosophical Society. And we find that the record at the time as to the administration of the two superior sections, stated thus at Bombay in 1881 : " Need not be dealt with at present in the code of rules laid before the public." It went on to give one or two particulars, the conditions of admission being more stringent as members passed inward. But no responsibilities connected with the superior sections threw any kind of weight on the ordinary members.

Then, after the great shaking of the Society, that I mentioned, in 1885, many members were afraid of the very word " Occultism ". They preferred to take up the position of students unconnected with any special views or beliefs, and that was a perfectly justifiable position for the bulk of members of the Society. It has remained as its basis down to the present time. No one coming into the Society is subjected to any questions as to what is his religion, what are his opinions, what are his philosophic or scientific views. The Society claims to be a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, and

therefore no conditions are laid on a member which would restrict his opinions or his thoughts. The other two sections were for the time, if I may use the word, veiled.

When in 1888 H. P. Blavatsky formed what you all know as the Esoteric Section—she published the fact in *The Key to Theosophy*—i.e., a body of people who, by their study, had become convinced of the truth of those basic truths of all religions that they find in their Scriptures, and in what may remain of the earlier teachings of the religions ; that Section therefore consisted of people who by their own study had convinced themselves of the truth of these fundamental verities, and who became pupils of H. P. Blavatsky under the conditions that she laid down. That Esoteric Section, then, has existed since 1888, and has formed what in the first beginning would have been called the second division, the middle division, of the whole Theosophical Society. Colonel Olcott pointed out, in authorising the formation, that it had no official connection with the Theosophical Society, i.e., no one simple member of the Society had any responsibility for the beliefs or the obligations entered into by the members of this Esoteric Section. In a part of the written record of the conversation between H. P. Blavatsky and her own Guru, or Master, He is recorded as saying : “ The Society has liberated itself from Our grasp and

influence, and We have let it go. We make no unwilling slaves. Out of the three objects, the second alone is attended to. It is no longer either a Brotherhood, or a body over the face of which broods the Spirit from beyond the great range."

With, however, the formation of the Esoteric Section the second section, the grade of pupils, was re-established, and in 1907 a certain group of Members of the Hierarchy, who had taken great interest in the Theosophical movement and had helped it since its foundation, consented to become again the First Section of the Theosophical Society. The knowledge of that fact, until quite lately, had been restricted to the Esoteric Section. Now we have come to a time in the history of the Society in which it is standing not only at the beginning of its second half-century, with all the record of the work that it has done behind it, but when the world at large is standing at the beginning of a New Age.

Whenever the World Teacher appears in this world for the purpose of proclaiming a new form of the ancient truths, on which form shall be built up a new civilisation, a new sub-race, as we call it, a sub-division of the Mother Race, a new type of human kind has already been born into the world. On that, as it is specially concerned with the Order of the Star in the East, more details familiar to very many of you will be given on the 28th. It must be enough

for me now, owing to the limits of time, to tell you that there is definite scientific evidence that a new sub-type within the great Aryan type, the sixth which has appeared in the fifth Root or Mother Race, is now recognised.

In the *Bureau of Ethnology* in Washington records, measurements and so on of that type are preserved. In certain parts of the world, especially in California and in Australia and New Zealand, and scattered about in other continents, this new type, recognisable at sight is being born; so much so that in a Californian newspaper sent to me some months ago I found an article in which this new type was described. It was called the American type. But that is claiming rather too much for our friends on the other side. The type is numerous there and will assume great importance. But it also is appearing elsewhere, and both Australia and New Zealand are recognised as other centres in which this type is appearing. The account given in the newspaper reminded me of what H. P. Blavatsky had said in her *Secret Doctrine* (published in 1888) of the sixth Race, as to the development in it of intuition. The newspaper said that "peculiar children" are being born and that these children are rather impatient if the teachers in a school to which they go want to prove a truth which to them is self-evident. It is a fine physical type showing

intellectual power and great strength of will but also this new faculty, the next step in human evolution predicted by the well-known philosopher Bergson a few years ago, the quality of intuition, of recognising truths at sight, as it were. That will be the leading characteristic of the sixth sub-division of the Āryan Race, modifying very much the intellectual factor of that division of the human race, and gradually from among the people of that sub-division a new Root or Mother Race will develop.

There are mentioned a number of other physical signs with which I will not trouble you now. Looking then at that appearance of a new type as a special mark of the stage of evolution at which we have arrived, we notice that, in the past, with each such new racial departure the World Teacher has come in order to supply the new human type with the ancient truths, in a form suited not only for individual development, but also for the foundation of a new type of civilisation. It must suffice now to say that that civilisation, as it grows and develops, will be, to put it in three words, a civilisation of Brotherhood. That is why the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity is the first object in the Theosophical Society. The one condition of membership is that you must recognise the Brotherhood of man and, as was pointed out in the message you heard a day or two ago, the Brotherhood extends to the sub-human kingdoms

as well as to the superhuman. And that is a point every member should keep in mind, so that he may do his duty toward the animals, the plants and even the minerals of the world in which he lives, from the lower rungs to the human in the great ladder of evolution. It may be, we hope it will be, that also there will be a recognition, gradually becoming general, of that superhuman kingdom, from which flow continually strength and enlightenment to the less developed human brethren, so as to quicken the evolution of man into that image of God's Eternity which is the ideal of the man made perfect.

We stand then to-day at this critical point, a new type appearing in the human kingdom. You notice that it has lately been said that the World Teacher will soon be amongst us. It is known to some of us that He has slightly hastened what we may call the date of His coming because of the troubled and almost hopeless condition of the modern world, rent by quarrels of every description—quarrels of Nations, quarrels of classes, quarrels of the various vocations even, that are the functions of national life—and so, it is the great need of the world that calls Him from His own secret retreat in the Himalayas to the rescue of a world which threatens to perish for the lack of Him. At this great crisis then in the world's history—to say nothing of those earlier millennia—when the Theosophical Society has existed

for fifty years, having proclaimed in all countries the great basic truths that are held in common by all religions—some of these overlaid for the time in order that the progress of the race along a special line of development may not in any way be checked—it would be strange if at such a time for the first time in the history of the great Āryan race and of the race that preceded it, the World Teacher did not come back to His world as a man among men, to guide it along the path of its further evolution.

Moreover, if you look around at the world, you see many signs in the thoughts of men that a great change is impending. Along the line of conflict the world seems to have gone so far that it has shaken the civilisation of the West; in the last terrible war, science, which ought to be the helper and the benefactor of mankind, became its deadliest enemy, by turning itself to the wrenching from nature the secrets of new instruments of destruction whereby men might more easily slaughter their fellow-men. They tell us now in the papers which reflect too much the foolish ideas of the average mass of mankind, that victory in the next great war will largely depend on the speed with which the first attack is launched. Whole cities can be wiped out in a few hours, and every man, woman and child killed by the destructive poison gas poured down upon them from the upper air. Science, having turned

itself in that direction, must either reform itself or else destroy the civilisation into whose care it was given. Instead of trying to find new ways in which to injure our neighbours, we have to find out new ways of spreading brotherly love, compassion, sympathy and helpful knowledge. One great advantage that many of you who have been born in India have, at this particular time, is that your civilisation is so ancient that you can trace the way in which knowledge has spread, in which those who knew the most made great discoveries for helping instead of killing, and you may see in that civilisation how an all-comprehensive religion of mutual duty was the very basis of Indian Nationality, from the Himalayas spreading southwards.

First, wave after wave came from Central Asia of the Āryan race that had been living under the protection of its R̥shis for thousands of years round the great city of Shamballa in the White Island, sending out its emigrants westward always—to Egypt, to Persia, to Greece and finally to Northern Europe. When the great catastrophe occurred, when the island of Poseidonis was whelmed beneath the waves of the Atlantic, the whole eastern continent was shaken by the tremors caused by that tremendous convulsion, B.C. Before that occurred and before the ancient City of the Bridge was shaken into fragments and only the White Island remained,

where are the ever blessed Ones—Who guide the destinies of the world—you know them as the four Kumaras (eternal youths)—just before that, wave after wave of the Āryan Mother Race, those who had been living in that central home of the Āryan race, came over through the passes of the Himālayas, round by Baluchistan and round by Assam, slowly made their way southward, and spread over the great Indian Peninsula.

There they established far and wide the Mother Religion of the race, and the type of civilisation peculiar to it, and have lived there ever since, for some eleven thousand years. That is why in some of your very ancient books you can trace the beginnings and the differences, and the slow spread of the great principles held by the leaders and the teachers of that mighty race. You will find in some of the village memorials strange little touches of the older morality based on the family and then on the groups of families which made the village. Outside the primitive village there was at first practically no fellowship with another village among the earlier inhabitants of the land, the Kolarians, who had not yet grown into the later civilisations. The regnant civilisation when the Āryans conquered the land was the Dravidian, and that had the village system in the south at least, and they presumably grouped the villages, into the larger groupings which made the districts and

kingdoms. I do not know the details. The Āryans united this with their own as brought from Central Asia, the chief difference being that the village headman was elected by the Āryan villagers and not appointed by the higher authority.

These successive civilisations followed one on the top of the other, and even in later times traces of the earlier occasionally persisted. Thus I came across one record in an old metal plate dug up in an excavation, in which it was said that a man killed a man of a neighbouring village, in a quarrel of course, and all the penalty imposed on him was to keep a lamp burning in a local temple. So slight were the bonds the Āryans found there between village and village. Gradually, as you know, but slowly, their own great civilisation permeated the whole land and grouped the villages more closely together. You may read in Manu and elsewhere the details of that mighty civilisation. And so things went on and civilisations were founded in other countries, each with its own great contribution to the other religions of the Āryan race, bearing their characteristic marks of the successive evolutionary stages made there over the western world.

Now, in the moment of peril to that latest Teutonic civilisation by the very success of its own characteristic, the concrete scientific mind, the world

is once more in danger, and that is, as I said, a little hastening the coming of the Teacher. In a very short paper sent out by my brother the Vice-President he ran over the changes in public opinion which the Theosophical Society has brought about. The more you look into those changes, either by the study of the written books of the middle of the nineteenth century or by remembering—if you are old enough to remember—what you were taught as children, you will see how greatly the world has widened out its conceptions, how much more liberal it has become in its thought, how persecutions for different religious opinions, so far as physical tortures are concerned, have practically passed away. The other tortures, the emotional and the mental, still to some extent remain, and the remedy for that is the spread of what is called the World Religion, the Fellowship of Faiths.

You all know now, from the leaflet that has been circulated so widely, the chief basic truths of Religion—truths that are common to every great Faith. The conditions of entry of an organisation into that are very few and very simple—the acceptance of the general statement, that of the few paragraphs printed in larger type on the leaflets. Then it is said : “ Each organisation that enters using its own phraseology in the exposition of the principles retains its own complete control over its ecclesiastical system, its orders, its rites, its ceremonies and other special characteristics.” That

condition is intended to ensure a fundamental unity with a complete independence of each organisation in its way of expounding them, in its own rites and ceremonies and its own particular organisation of its priesthood, using that word in its most general sense. Only the members of the organisation have those rights and privileges. But they are asked to agree to the admission of the members of all organisations within the Fellowship of the World Religion, to such forms of worship and ceremonies as confer no authority (within that organisation) nor technical membership within the community concerned. Each great religion for instance has its own organisation for the celebration of its sacraments, or as they are here called its Samskāras.

Putting this to you very frankly, by examples, I may mention that I have often been asked to perform a particular ceremony in Hindūism for a child, because the parents thought that my influence in the ceremony would be valuable to the child. I have always refused, on the ground that, not being technically a Hindū, having a white skin, having been born over on the other side of the world—in Kashmir people are as white as I am although they may be Hindūs—I should be intruding myself into a place I have no right to take if I perform one of the Hindū Samskāras, not being technically a Hindū. I mention that (it is personal

to myself) and I do not mind who knows it. The same would be true of an organisation like the Liberal Catholic Church. I may sympathise with its teachings and methods, as I do with those of all the great religions founded by the World Teacher; for how should a follower of the Teacher reject any of the forms that He has founded? But I should have no place in the administration of the holy Eucharist. I may take part in that, but not in the office of the priest or any minor order. And if you carried that out in the different religions, you would see what is meant by the words "such of the ceremonies as confer no authority nor technical membership". I believe in regard to Bishops of the Liberal Catholic Church the Bishops are elected, according to the ancient custom by those to whom they are to minister. My presence at the Eucharist ceremony and taking part as one of the congregation gives me no right to vote in the election of the Bishops. I want you to distinguish a little clearly. That is why I mention those details. No amount of any knowledge that any person may possess, no kind of what may be called the grade of advance in the higher world, gives any right of interference with the special rites and ceremonies established in a particular religion.

You who are Hindūs will remember that if a learned Brāhmaṇa came into the court of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, Śrī Kṛṣṇa came down from His throne

and bowed at the feet of the Sage as being a spiritual superior. In modern days that kind of recognition has gone by. But nothing could show you more plainly than that how, in your ancient days, the highest in the Kingdom bowed before those who were then the highest in true knowledge. They might be poor, they might have only a couple of cloths ; but wisdom was their wealth and that was the supreme authority. And so with this outer Fellowship of the religions of the world, all interference with one by those who do not belong to it is repudiated. The only other condition is abstinence from all attacks on any organisation in the Fellowship and the treatment of their members as brothers.

There lies then one of the directions in which work is to be carried on. You remain in the religion in which you were born, if it satisfies your spiritual hunger and thirst. None of the bodies will be what is called proselytising bodies, *i.e.*, they will not try to attract any persons from the faith into which they were born, and which they find satisfies their highest intellectual and spiritual needs. It will be a peace-maker, not a divider, in the great human family.

Any religious or ethical association may enter into this. The question was put before the Council of the Theosophical Society in its meetings a few

days ago, and the whole of that Council—except one who wrote “no” to the question and two who did not answer out of the forty-one National Societies—voted that the Theosophical Society should enter the Fellowship of the World Religion. The Society has been carrying on this propaganda since 1878. It was only continuing the work for which it was founded, while leaving every member free to accept or reject the truths it spreads. It will thus become “the corner-stone of the religions of the future”; not a substitute for them, but holding all firmly together. In that way I trust that through the next half century it will continue its benevolent work, holding up the great truths and proclaiming them, leaving its organisation open to every one who desires to enter it, because a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood cannot exclude any human being from its membership.

The second great organisation to enter it was the Liberal Catholic Church, by the decision of its Synod, and the third was the Order of the Star. Thus these three are now united in the Fellowship of Faiths, while each keeps its own organisation intact.

I believe that others will follow in the course of a few days.¹ It will spread gradually over the world, carrying everywhere religious peace.

¹ The Bhārata Samāj, embodying a great reform in Hindūism was the next to join.—A.B.

The second great movement, as you know, has for its title the "World University". That covers education from the more modern to the most ancient method of teaching. Looking again for a moment into the very ancient civilisation which lived in India some 11,000 years ago you will find that your old universities were in the forests of India. There some of the great Upanishads were revealed. There men studied for a life-time under some great sage and the older universities, even in more modern times, have followed the idea of being close to nature. All the great literature of India had its work in close contact with nature, mineral, vegetable, animal, human, and superhuman. The wonderful books which are the admiration of the world were the product of this life-long contact, and the Sages of the past lived in the forests and gathered round them, in the grades of teaching, literally thousands of students. Then came the time when the better known, what we should more specifically call universities were founded, which were the glory of the middle ages in India. Those who can read about them can learn how they carried out their studies and their methods. Famous in the north was that great University—which has been changed in name from Takṣhashilā to Taxila—on the highway from Persia into India. Ten times was that territory conquered, but the University remained sacred and untouched.

In the Buddhist *Jātaka* you may read much of the way in which students were taught there. They must be sixteen years and over, having already received what would be called a good education. Sons were sent there by monarchs in India. They carried with them a gift for the teacher to whom they were going ; we read of one prince whose only personal property was a pair of sandals, an umbrella, a couple of cloths ; above all no money, although he carried a gift to the teacher of a thousand gold pieces. This seems to have been the invariable rule. All the students were penniless, so that there might be no differences observed in the temple of learning such as are recognised in the outer world.

A student who could bring no fee, being very poor, would help in the taking care of the teacher's household, in the cutting of wood and so on. But the mightiest monarch in India would send his son thither, and the young prince could claim nothing in the way of personal possessions except those things that I mentioned. And you find one story there how a hasty prince, being reproached for having broken a beggar's bowl and asked to give another, answered : " I have nothing with which to buy a bowl. If you will come to me after my return home, then I will discharge my debt." And there are many records of that kind, where the princes of India paid debts of

that sort incurred during the years of studentship. The kings at that time thought that it was a very good thing for a man who was to wield power to learn the duty of obedience, the duty of discipline, the duty of rendering honour to the learned—I was going to say qualities which need to be restored in India. The Guru must become a true Guru, and then the Shishya will become a real Shishya. It is degradation from the highest point of view of teachers which has brought about the irreverence of pupils. Sometimes when I have been asked to teach Hindūs the old duty of reverence and obedience to the teacher, I have asked whether the teacher had learnt his duty of gentleness and tenderness to those whom he taught.

Along this line of education, in the schools and colleges that will be affiliated to the World University at one or other of its centres, a definite insistence of the duty of the teacher as well as of the pupil will be laid down. Teachers must be able to maintain discipline without brutality—by love and not by fear. Obedience gained by love is always present with the student, and this we have tried in our educational work in India. So successful has it been that the school inspectors have reported to their Governments, not only in Benares where we began, but now down in Southern India where we are working, on the happiness, brightness, intelligence and courtesy which they find in the Theosophical schools. Our teachers

are those who sacrifice in order to teach. In the old days in Benares, the first thing we looked to was not the high degrees of the would-be teacher but his character for gentleness and power of teaching, so that he might be able to maintain discipline without any form of cruelty. When an inspector once said to my brother George, "You cannot maintain discipline without the cane," his answer was: "Come and look at my boys and see if there is no discipline; no instrument of punishment is permitted within our walls." If teachers cannot teach without cruelty they should take up some other vocation. Once I said: "It is far better for a man to go and break stones in the road for a living than to break the hearts of young children."

Our ideal then in the World University will be to have schools and colleges affiliated who accept these principles of education. They do not make boys and girls inefficient. In the examinations lately in Benares our boys and girls have stood at the top of the list of matriculation examinees. Parents who used to send boys to us at first objected to our being a "playing college" and a "playing school" but they found that play made boys and girls very much brighter and increased their health. In this University, as you have heard from my brother Krishnamurti, the great ideal will be to turn out the good citizen, the man able to discharge some function in the

National life. If you realise what caste was in the past, how it is said in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* "I divided the castes according to their qualities," you will understand its true meaning. There is a great advantage in caste as long as it maintains its qualities. It lived and was useful as long as the people performed their Dharma in that system ; and when, as most people in the West say, using the word "vocation" instead of "caste," "we must have vocational education, vocational training" that is true ; provided you give a good general education which enables pupils to associate together whatever their vocations may be.

Caste, however, has gradually failed, because the castes failed in their duty to their Nation. The Brāhmaṇa became rich, using his brain to gain a better living than his neighbours instead of being a teacher content with poverty while he shared his knowledge. The Kṣhāṭṭriya forgot his duty of protecting the poor, of seeing that all artisans and workmen were properly supplied with materials for their vocations, of taking care of the widows and the orphans of those who had died in defence of their land, of doing justice to the weakest and not allowing strength to be used for oppression. You remember there was a day in India when, if a subject of a King suffered a theft, he had a right to claim from the ruler four times the amount of

the thing he had lost. For, if the King did his duty as Confucius taught in China there would be no thieves in his kingdom. The village watchman of a place had to make good a loss by theft, if the thing was not recovered the watchman of a village had either to restore the stolen article, or restore its value to the man who suffered. I am not sure that, if we do our duty and if we make an education available which, while giving the knowledge that is wanted, builds up character as well, we may not see the return of those golden days when rank, as it grew greater, meant greater service, when the sacrifice demanded from the highest was the proof of his fitness for his office.

You must remember it was said of kings that they must wake in order that their subjects might sleep in safety. The higher the office the greater the sacrifice, and that is the reason why Indian civilisation is still alive and is to-day reviving, although as you trace it backwards you trace it into the darkness of the past. In the World University that better education is our ideal, and we shall offer that, as far as we are able to offer it, to the people of various countries in the world.

Then there comes the third line that you heard of yesterday—the Revival of the Mysteries, and in fact everywhere the increase of the vitality of ceremonial. You who are Hindūs know how in many of your acts

of worship you invoke the presence of the Devas, how you cry to the Deva Agni, the Deva of Fire, to descend upon your offering ; and there is no answer from the apparently uninhabited heaven. The same thing is true of other faiths. The Parsi, when he makes the fire temple, can no longer call down fire from heaven, so that it may fall on the altar of fire. He has to wait, having gathered all kinds of fire, until lightning strikes a tree and sets it on fire. That substitute for the heavenly fire can alone be reached.

And so in other faiths as well. As regards the Christian faith I think one of my brothers here said yesterday that if angels came in response to an invocation, people would be very much surprised, probably even frightened ; and yet they ask for it ; many of them are learning gradually to believe in the reality and so are drawing those great hosts of angelic helpers, as may be seen by those who have their sight developed beyond the physical. That Revival of the Mysteries includes the vivifying of all ceremonial in the religions that are willing, or able, to produce pupils who shall know something of the science of the higher worlds as well of science of the lower. You do not think it wonderful to-day, whatever your grandfathers would have thought of it, if you can speak a message into empty air. What is called wireless telegraphy

carries the waves of air that you have created far away to other places. For the first time here we have what they call "loud speakers" up in the tree. When I first lectured here in 1893 we thought our large hall sufficient to accommodate our audience; it was as much as we hoped for, to be able to fill by our gatherings. Here, looking round this enormous concourse I see thousands of people listening comfortably, because that little disk is in front of me. How many of Nature's secrets still remain to be discovered, if only science would look into the helpful side of Nature rather than into her destructive powers; human beings are not worthy enough to wield those for they endanger the safety of the race.

If in these three great lines, all of you, and people like you in all parts of the world, would help; if the Theosophical Society could win the millions to whom it speaks in the course of every year to help; if those who understand a little of what the Society is trying to do, would help, what so-called miracles could be worked. Try to realise that it is not a few people that can do it; that we who speak to you can only obey those beyond us; that we are trying to make you realise not any particular thing about us, except that we are channels of Those that we serve—the great Masters in the higher superhuman world, before Whom we

bow in reverence. Not ~~one~~ day begins and not one evening closes, that I do not lay at the feet of that mighty Hierarchy my humble offer of service as a channel for Them. It is not what we have to give—for we like you are poor in knowledge—but we are willing to be channels and in that you will realise that there lie the true strength and the true glory of humanity.

It does not need a special belief save a belief that there are greater powers, such as that "Power which makes for righteousness" of which Mathew Arnold spoke, who belonged, I believe, to no special religion, and did not care about any rites or ceremonies. If any of you is willing to become a channel, not only a momentary wish, but with that will that cuts through every obstacle, the will that counts everything as worthless save the idea of serving the world and raising humanity a little, ever so little, nearer to the feet of God, you can do so and become a channel. *There* is real power, the power of transmitting, not of originating—this mechanical instrument transmits my voice. We can be transmitters, as this is a transmitter, if we by devotion, by earnestness, by keeping nothing back, give ourselves to the service of the race. The more you can do it, the more you can help India; and the more you can concentrate yourselves upon it, the greater will be your ability to help the people around

you and then the people in a larger area. The great Helpers are ever seeking for transmitters in the lower world, and to transmit Them is a higher honour than to make any discovery for oneself.

THEOSOPHICAL CONVENTION LECTURES

1896-1924

		Rs.	A.
1886: Philosophy of the Bhagavad-Gita,	by T. Subba Row		
	Cloth ..	2	8
	Boards ...	1	8
1893: The Building of the Kosmos,	by Annie Besant		
	Wrappers (Red. Price) ...	0	2
1894: The Self and Its Sheaths,	by Annie Besant		
	Cloth ...	1	0
	Boards ...	0	12
1895: The Path of Discipleship,	by Annie Besant		
	Cloth ...	2	8
	Boards ...	1	0
1896: Three Paths to Union with God,	by Annie Besant		
	Boards ...	1	0
	Wrappers ...	0	12
1896: Four Great Religions,	by Annie Besant.		
	Cloth ...	1	4
	Boards ...	0	12
1898: Dharma,	by Annie Besant		
	Cloth ...	0	10
	Boards ...	0	8
1898: The Evolution of Life and Form,	by Annie Besant		
	Cloth ..	1	4
	Boards ...	0	12
1899: Avatars,	by Annie Besant		
	Boards ...	1	2
	Wrappers ...	0	14
1900: Ancient Ideals in Modern Life,	by Annie Besant		
	Cloth ...	2	0
	Boards ...	1	4
	Wrappers ...	1	0
1901: The Religious Problem in India,	by Annie Besant		
	Boards ...	1	4
	Wrappers ...	1	0
1902: The Laws of the Higher Life,	by Annie Besant		
	1	8
1904: Theosophy in Relation to Human Life,	by Annie Besant		
	Boards ...	0	12
1905: Hints on the Study of the Bhagavad-Gita,	by Annie Besant		
	Boards ...	1	2
	Wrappers ...	0	14
1906: The Wisdom of the Upanishats,	by Annie Besant		
	Cloth ...	1	8
	Boards ...	1	2
	Wrappers ...	0	14

1907: An Introduction to Yoga,	by Annie Besant	Cloth ...	1 8
		Boards ...	0 12
1908: Gleanings from Light on the Path,	by Lilian Edger	Cloth ...	1 8
		Boards ...	1 0
1911: Ideals of Theosophy,	by Annie Besant	Boards ...	1 0
1912: Theosophy and the Theosophical Society,	by Annie Besant	Cloth ...	1 8
		Boards ...	1 0
1914: Theosophy and Modern Thought,	by C. Jinarājadāsa	1 0
1915: Theosophy and Life's Deeper Problems,	by Annie Besant	1 0
1916: Duties of the Theosophist,	by Annie Besant	1 0
1917: The Theosophical Outlook,	by C. Jinarājadāsa, G. S. Arundale, B. P. Wadia, Sir T. Sadasivier	.. .	1 8
1918: Problems of Reconstruction,	by Annie Besant	Cloth ...	1 8
		Boards ...	1 0
1919: The Great Plan,	by Annie Besant	Cloth ...	2/
		Wrappers ...	
1920: The Inner Government of the World,	by Annie Besant	Paper ...	
1921: Theosophy and World-Problems,	by Annie Besant, C. Jinarājadāsa, J. Krishnamur and Bishop G. S. Arundale	Cloth Boards	
1922: The Real and the Unreal,	by Dr. Annie Besant, C. Jinarājadāsa and Bishop G. S. Arund.	Cloth ..	1 8
		Boards ...	1 4
1923: Theosophy, the Interpreter,	by C. Jinarājadāsa, Bishop G. S. Arundale and Dr. J. H. Cousins	Cloth ...	1 8
		Boards ...	1 0
1924: Theosophy as the Basic Unity of National Life,	by Dr. Annie Besant, J. Krishnamurti, The Lady Emily Lutyens, and C. Jinarājadāsa	Cloth ...	1 8
		Boards ...	1 0

Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras

